


From: churchhistorylibrary@reference-service.info 
Subject: CH21299 Response to your General reference question
Date: September 3, 2013 11:58:19 AM MDT
To: [REDACTED]
Reply-To: churchhistorylibrary@reference-service.info

Response to question number: CH21299

Your question:

Hello, I noticed in your opening statement of the Collection Policy that materials come from a wide spectrum of sources. When I was a kid, my father had some books I believe they were called History of the Church and Journal of Discourses.

Are both of these vetted and reliable sources to the church or just a historical account from any source available at the time?

Are these collections of materials with diverse authors?

Was the same care taken in recording them as was applied to preserving the Book of Mormon and other scriptural works of the church?

Is there a way to determine who the authors are for writings within these works and if so how?

Our response is:

[REDACTED]

Here is a link to the Encyclopedia of Mormonism article on the Journal of Discourses (http://eom.byu.edu/index.php/Journal_of_Discourses). This is not considered an official publication of the Church and Church publications do not source from the Journal of Discourses. Editors of Church publications will instead try to find the original talk as published in the Deseret News.

Here is a link (<http://www.ldschurchnews.com/articles/56208/Early-histories-were-a-prequel.html>) to a 2008 Church News article which discusses the History of the Church. Again, these volumes (like the Journal of Discourses) are not considered scripture and the same care as recording scripture was not taken in recording this information. The new edition of the Doctrine and Covenants has removed all references to this collection from its section headings. The following statement about this change can be found on lds.org.

"The parenthetical references to the History of the Church have been deleted in the section headings and in other locations in introductory material. While foundational for our understanding of early Latter-day Saint history, the History of the Church contains historical errors about some sections of the Doctrine and Covenants and is inaccessible to most Church members. In addition, the revised section headings rely on other sources, including the Manuscript History of the Church, early manuscript revelation books, and other sources that are reproduced in the Joseph Smith Papers. Quotations from the Manuscript History of the Church and the History of the Church are collectively referred to in section headings as Joseph Smith's history." (<http://www.lds.org/scriptures/adjustments?lang=eng>)

I hope this is helpful.

Sincerely,

Jenny St. Clair
Reference Librarian
[Church History Library](#)

The status of your question is now **closed**.

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